

HOUSE BILL 433

By Lynn

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2,
relative to convenient voting centers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2, Chapter 3, Part 3, is amended by deleting the part and substituting the following:

2-3-301. Purpose of part — Convenient voting centers.

(a) The purpose of this part is to authorize counties to establish convenient voting centers for local and state elections to make it convenient for voters to vote at centralized voting areas on election day in the county in which the voter is registered, regardless of the voter's precinct.

(b) A county may exercise the authority granted in subsection (a) by adopting a resolution by a super majority vote of its county election commission. A super majority of at least four (4) of the five (5) county election commissioners must approve the resolution. The super majority vote is also required to establish the number and locations of convenient centers in the county. Unless four (4) out of five (5) county election commissioners vote in favor of the resolution and the number and location of the convenient voting centers, the voting precincts as described in §§ 2-3-102 and 2-3-103 must be utilized.

(c) Upon affirmative vote by the super majority vote of the county election commission, the commission shall submit to the coordinator of elections a project plan for the convenient voting centers. The coordinator of elections shall approve the project plan prior to the county election commission implementing the plan.

2-3-302. Establishment of convenient voting centers.

(a) After the required approval of the project plan for the convenient voting centers, the county election commission may create a program that establishes convenient voting centers within the county pursuant to § 2-3-303 for federal, state, and local elections.

(b) If convenient voting centers are used in the election, then the county election commission is not limited by § 2-3-101(a). However, a polling location must not be changed within ten (10) days of an election, except in an emergency.

(c) Each convenient voting center must have a secure electronic connection, certified by the coordinator of elections, to the computerized voter registration system maintained by the county election commission permitting all voting information processed by any computer at a convenient voting center to be immediately accessible to all other computers at all convenient voting centers in the county. The secure electronic connection must be sufficient to prevent a voter from voting more than once and to prevent unauthorized access to the computerized voter registration system.

(d) A convenient voting center must meet applicable federal and state laws.

(e) Chapter 7 of this title applies to convenient voting centers.

(f) Prior to closing a polling location due to the opening or availability of a convenient voting center, the county election commission shall announce a thirty-day period in which the commission shall receive public comment from registered voters regarding the closing of the polling location.

(g) If a polling location is closed due to the opening of a convenient voting center, then the county election commission shall ensure that convenient voting centers are located in locations convenient to voters who had been assigned to the closed polling location.

(h) If a polling location is closed due to the opening of a convenient voting center, then the county election commission shall post signage on election day, and during the early voting period if that polling location was used as an early voting center, in a conspicuous manner on or near the entrances to the closed polling location that states that the polling location is closed and that provides the address of each convenient voting center. The posting requirement must be met until after the next November statewide general election following the closure.

2-3-303. Determination of number of convenient voting centers.

Taking into consideration all facts and circumstances, the county election commission shall determine the number of convenient voting centers to be used in the county election. For every ten thousand (10,000) registered voters, the county election commission shall locate at least one (1) convenient voting center; provided, that each county election commission shall locate at least two (2) convenient voting centers within a county. In determining the location of the convenient voting centers, the county election commission shall consider the density of the county population, the geographic dividers, and other facts and circumstances that exist within the county.

2-3-304. Publication of location of convenient voting centers — Notification to voters and government officials.

If the county election commission establishes convenient voting centers within a county pursuant to § 2-3-303, then the county election commission shall publish in a newspaper of general circulation the location of the convenient voting centers not less than thirty (30) days before the election. The county election commission shall mail to each registered voter a notice containing a list of the convenient voting centers located within the county. If more than one (1) registered voter is at the same address, then only one (1) notice may be sent to that address. Furthermore, immediately after the

establishment of a convenient voting center, the county election commission shall give written notification of the changes to the office of local government, the comptroller of the treasury, and the coordinator of elections.

2-3-305. Applicability of polling place requirements.

Section 2-3-107 applies to convenient voting centers.

2-3-306. Voting period for convenient voting centers.

(a) Convenient voting centers must be open for voting for a minimum of ten (10) continuous hours but no more than thirteen (13) hours. Convenient voting centers in the eastern time zone must close at eight o'clock p.m. (8:00 p.m.), prevailing time, and convenient voting centers in the central time zone must close at seven o'clock p.m. (7:00 p.m.) prevailing time.

(b) At least fifteen (15) days before the date of each election, the county election commission shall determine a uniform time for the opening of all convenient voting centers.

2-3-307. Evaluation report.

The coordinator of elections shall file a report with the state and local government committee of the senate and the local government committee of the house of representatives by January 31 following an election conducted under this part.

SECTION 2. The headings to sections in this act are for reference purposes only and do not constitute a part of the law enacted by this act. However, the Tennessee Code Commission is requested to include the headings in any compilation or publication containing this act.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.